1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

abakulumba) and their eldest sons are his two heirs in the chieftainship. Young girls, daughters of neighbouring chiefs, are carried off with a show of force from their fathers' homes, by the young chief's men, who themselves later contribute to the herd of cows sent to regularize the position. The two great wives are thus married not solely with the cows of their husband, but also with those of the men whose sons their sons will one day rule. The duty of arranging the match lies with the village headmen of the old chief, and it is said that they are often guided in their choice by dreams.

The girls who are carried off are just about to reach puberty, and they stay at the house of one of the men of the old chief until their periods begin. When both have reached puberty they are initiated, not at their fathers' houses, as are ordinary girls, but in the country of their husband, and both together. At their initiation the old men and women of the country (contemporaries of the old retiring chief) play the part normally played by a girl's parents and their neighbours, while the young chief and his men take the usual part of a husband and his friends. And then, after the ceremonies are over, the two girls are given to the young chief as his wives. Houses are built for them separately, i.e. in the senior age-village of the new chiefdom for the first wife, in the next senior village for the second wife; and in this separation of dwelling place is already apparent the future division of the chiefdom between their sons.

Within the chiefdom, and among the wives and children of the chief two 'sides' (*imibafu*) are recognized. Usually, in each country there are, at its beginning, at least two age-villages and half the wives of the chief on either side. This distinction of two sides is important in succession, a son from each side eventually inheriting half the country.

From the time of the 'coming out' of the two young chiefs till the day of their own father's death there exists between him and them a delicate balance of prestige and power. Each of the three, traditionally, has judicial authority in his own age-villages, but appeals in difficult cases may be taken from either of the young chiefs and their village headmen to the old chief and his village headmen, while the religious duties of chieftainship are exercised entirely by the old chief. But in the old days it was the young chief who fought and fed men. 'Young chiefs used to lead their

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, Mu Ngoude

881 584 One of the women of the groom's party then fetched two banana leaves, one of sweet banana and one of plantain, and put them down in Kyobwe's hut. Meantime the mother of the groom changed the bride's belt and the bark-cloth worn between the legs, dressing her in new ones, and burying the old cloth, soiled by first menstruation, in a bundle of dry banana leaves. These she placed on top of the fresh leaves already mentioned, covered the pile with a small rough mat, and sprinkled it with powdered medicine. The bride knelt on the mat and, with head bent, ate roast bananas also sprinkled with the powdered medicine, which her mother-in-law handed to her. Her young brother who had washed with her also shared the bananas. After this the bride is free to wash, but not yet to oil herself.

The groom's mothers were feasted on meat and bananas—two large and two small basketfuls—and returned home. The atmosphere all through the ritual was one of rejoicing, and it was markedly a women's affair. The chief and several other men were present but, apart from his scolding of the women for not bringing a bull, the chief played no part at all.

[431] According to strict custom the groom's mothers should have come a second time with gifts of food (*ukusumbulela*)[1] to cement the friendship, but since the groom was in a hurry to get to work on the Lupa gold-fields this act was omitted. 'They brought the two lots of food together,' we were told, 'some of the milk and bananas were for the *ukwingesia* and some for the *ukusumbulela*.'

●583 535 Three weeks later (June 14) the groom, with his go-between and other friends, brought the main body of marriage-cattle (*ukukwa*), and they danced the stamping dance (*ukukanya nganya*) in the bride's father's courtyard and on the litter of the seclusion hut, brandishing their spears as they stamped to the war rhythm. The bride's companions and mothers danced in a separate group, one mother carrying the bride on her shoulders. A lavish feast of cooked food was set before the groom and his friends, and they in their turn scattered pieces of meat and cents which the bride's [E78] maids and 'mothers' scrambled for. Meantime a quarrel broke out between the bride's father and her brothers over the distribution of the marriage-cattle.

881 584 Six weeks after the *ukwingesia* (July 29) the bride, accompanied by two of her father's wives, two of her maids, and a third girl invited because she was a good singer, went to wash ritually again

[1] *Ukusumbulela*: to give a present for the first time to a new friend.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa
Selya, MuNgonde

585 over her and the maids closest to her. Her father, Mwasofu, and four or five other men, his village mates, came to give her gifts to break the taboo (*ukubonola*). Her father came first and asked: 'Which is she?' She was pointed out to him and he gave her 10 cents, greeted her with the words 'Good morning, my child', and shook hands. At the same time he admonished her saying: 'If you ever go away from your husband who has married you, then you have a case against you, you have a great case against you.'

The other men followed: 'Good morning, good morning, you have recovered.' They gave some cents and shook hands and repeated her father's warning. One, having no cents, brought a spearhead which he said he would redeem later for 50 cents.

585 Then over the girl's head the father spoke to the officiant:
583 'Where are the bull and the other cow?'

Officiant: 'I am poor. Thank you for giving us your daughter, thank you.'

Father: 'Pay a bull. See, my child has stayed at home a long time. It is seven months since she grew up and it is not right that she should stay here always. Bring the bull!'

Officiant: 'Yes, we all regret that, but I am very poor.'

A mother: 'You know very well that our child is pure [i.e. a virgin].'

Father: 'See, she is the eldest daughter, and there is someone here with a case against him. My brother has expectations from her, he is claiming cattle. If her husband comes to carry her off we will beat him, we will beat him, we will take cattle.'

585 Then the men went away and the women, 'mothers' and 'mothers-in-law', together began to admonish (*ukufunda*) her. 'Yesterday evening she was a child, now she has grown up, she is a woman, let us tell her about womanhood.' Her father's second wife, and an elderly woman of her father's village, talked most, but advice was shouted at her by several women at once and it was impossible to take it down verbatim. The following points were mentioned: She must cook for her children. (This was repeated with emphasis.) She must cook for her husband; she must be gentle (*mololo*) to her children; she must welcome and cook for her mothers when they come to see her.

One mother said: 'If your husband has built in a boys' village and his fellows come wanting water to drink don't say: "There is

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

CHAPTER IV

Husband & Wife

5-83

DOES the African buy his wife? The answer must be ambiguous, because the situation is so. I put the question to two highly educated natives, and both, independently, gave an immediate and emphatic "Yes." I put it to some elderly men of no education at all in our sense of the term, and they indignantly answered "No." There are, too, educated Africans, of many tribes, who resent as an outrage the suggestion of purchase. And wives, whatever the implication may be, take pride in the number of cattle paid for them, much as a girl at home might regard with satisfaction the amount of dowry she brought to the common purse. Some years ago a bride went to her husband, with the full consent of her father, no cattle, or any other goods, having been given for her, but the experiment was disastrous. The other married women regarded her with contempt, as a person of no consideration. A most unhappy life followed, and in a very short time the home was broken up. Such an attitude, however, is obviously not permanent. The Christians of the Tonga tribe gave up, some time ago, the whole custom, with, I understand, no evil results.

No Konde youth can get a wife if he, or his family

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

• 583 on his behalf, cannot find the requisite number of cattle to hand over to the relatives of the bride; but the idea of purchase is not present to the minds of any of the numerous relatives on both sides who take part in the discussion; and in point of fact nothing corresponding to our idea of purchase takes place. The wife is in no sense a slave. She belongs to her husband only in the sense in which the wife of a white man belongs to him. The cattle are, indeed, a *quid pro quo*, for the man who has got a wife has got a good thing, and it is, say the Konde, right that the parents, who had all the trouble of bringing his wife up for him, should get some return for their toil. The father, in receiving the cattle, guarantees the conduct of his daughter in all that is expected of a wife, but in nothing that is expected of a slave. She is not a chattel, as our own laws once declared a wife to be. If she goes astray, the cattle, with the increase, are returned to the husband. On the other hand, if the husband is divorced, he will not get back all the cattle when his wife leaves him. The father and brothers retain always the rights of guardianship, and may remove the wife if they think it necessary to do so, the number of cattle, if any, to be returned being decided in open discussion. But if the marriage takes place, as it often does, before the whole of the goods have been handed over, the first daughter goes to the maternal grandfather or his heirs, and if she reaches marriageable age before the full amount has been paid, the cattle for her marriage belong, not to her father, but to her maternal grandfather.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

third to cook food, and a final gift is required to make her lie down on the mat along with her girl friend, who stays with her for a few days. This ceremony of the gifts is never omitted in heathen marriages, and each successively binds the girl to her husband. 584 585

If the bride is a twin, the doctor must be present, to sprinkle medicines over house and bedding, and to give the couple a decoction supposed to prevent the occurrence of twins in the new family. 789

Except the daughters of Christian parents, all Konde girls are married before they arrive at puberty, and what has been described above applies to child wives, who stay with their husbands for about a month, and then go home. 582 177

The child wife having grown to womanhood, however, further ceremonies have to be observed. The husband arrives at her father's house with an ox for the feast, and a mock struggle for possession of the bride takes place. The women of her family barricade themselves in the house, which is attacked by the women of the other family. Payment of a shilling opens the door, and the further struggle which takes place in the house is brought to an end by the formal presentation of the ox. The husband and his friends enter, and engage in a weird dance, a mere tramping of the floor in unison, with shouting and waving of spears, no doubt a survival of what was once marriage by capture. 583 ●

The washing and shaving of the bride follows, and her bark-cloth is burned, and a new one given her, and then comes the feast of beef and beer, the materials 585

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

583 The dowry cattle are usually found by the father of the bridegroom; if he does not own them himself, the boy's uncles come to his aid; and in the event of divorce, they are re-distributed, with the increase, in the proportion in which each contributed. The father of the bride, who receives the cattle, as a rule divides them among his relatives, one going, in the case of the first daughter to be married, to the village headman.

593 562 It is usual to commiserate the sad lot of the African wife. I am not sure that much commiseration is called for. If the husband converts his duties of natural guardian into those of oppressor, he will answer to her father and brothers. As I have indicated, she owns property in a small measure; she is mistress in her own house; even her husband seldom interferes with her decisions, and no one else ever does. She has to work hard, it is true, working up till old age at tasks that would quickly kill a European woman. But she is not unhappy; indeed one sees more happy faces among them than unhappy; and she is blessed beyond imagination in comparison with the horrible conditions in which some women in our own country lived during the earlier part of the Industrial Revolution; and large numbers of them are happy in their husbands and children. Although many girls are married before they know what is happening to them, and many are unhappily yoked, as revealed by the great numbers who run away later with young men of their own age; yet there are countless happy families, where deep affection binds

4: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

601 *Mwisukulu* = grandparent or grandchild; but a man addresses his male grandparents as *Mwinangu* (my compeer) and his female grandparents as *Nkasi* (wife). A woman addresses her male grandparents as *Ndume* (husband) and her female grandparents as *Mwinangu* (my compeer).

Ndume = husband, extended for a woman to include the husbands of 'sisters', male grandparents, male grandchildren, husbands of female grandparents or grandchildren; all 'brothers' of a husband, husband of a father's sister, and grandfathers of a husband, and finally, the husband's sister's son.

Nkasi = wife; for a man it includes the wives of 'brothers', female grandparents and grandchildren, or wives of male ones; all sisters of wife, daughters of wife's brothers, wives of grandsons by marriage, the 'grandmothers' of a wife, and the wife of a maternal uncle.[1]

605 The Ngonde do not seem to distinguish cross-cousins from ortho-cousins as clearly as do the Maravi, or the Yao, Makua, and Makonde peoples.

MARRIAGE

582 There are no exogamous clans, but the descendants of a common grandfather (either paternal or maternal) are forbidden to marry.[2] The descendants of a common great-grandfather are supposed not to marry, but sometimes they do so before the relationship is discovered; they then simply drink a special medicine, but do not break the marriage. The old men speak of a now abandoned custom of preferential cross-cousin marriage.[3] The husband of the eldest girl of a family has the prior right to marry her full sisters, and such marriages are very common. A man also has the right to marry the daughter of his wife's brother, therefore the wife of the wife's brother is classed as a parent-in-law in kinship terminology.[4]

● 583 The passage of cattle makes children of a marriage legitimate. A child of a man who has given no cattle belongs either to the mother's husband or to her father. Cattle are in rapid circulation. Few men possess more than six cows at any time, yet marriage payments range from four to thirty cows (formerly only one or two were given). Marriage involves considerable expenditure and months of preliminary economic activity.[5] The cattle are seldom handed over all at once, but in ones or twos over a period of years. Full brothers have a claim to the cattle of their sister's marriage, and at the marriage of his eldest daughter the father hands one of the cows to the village headman.[6]

584 A girl commonly goes to visit and sleep with her betrothed husband for several years before she finally sets up house for him. The ideal procedure is by negotiation with the girl's father, but a man without cows may run off with a girl and satisfy her father with cows later on, or a man with cattle may seduce a married woman and pay her husband the adultery fine of two cows, plus the cows originally given for her marriage. A girl may be betrothed before puberty, and may visit her husband, but she is supposed to be virgin at her initiation ceremony, and is generally not allowed to

[1] Sanderson, 3, 1923. [2] Mackenzie, 1925, p. 55.

[3] See Wilson, 2, 1936, p. 267; but according to Sanderson, 3, 1923, p. 453, cross-cousins are classed as sisters, and all first cousins are unmarriageable; according to Johnston, 1897, p. 415, and to Mackenzie 1925, p. 53, cousin marriage was not allowed.

[4] Wilson, 2, 1936, p. 262; Sanderson, op. cit., p. 451.

[5] Wilson and Hunter, 1939, p. 11. [6] Mackenzie, 1925, p. 65.

4: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FN17 Ngonde FN

622 624 631 and the great commoners of the most senior villages. The constitution of a chiefdom was that of a limited monarchy, for the chief was dependent on his great commoners for his authority. All the way up the scale, with the exception of the Kyungu himself, each chief had his own great commoners and people directly subordinate to him. The organization of families and villages within the chiefdoms was the same as that of the Nyakyusa, but the organization of a territory ruled by a noble differed in that although there were always at least two age-villages, there were no great commoners.[1]

361 621 Villages vary in size, and average from forty to fifty households. In the first instance a boys' village is built on ground allotted to them by the village of their fathers, but a new allotment is made ceremoniously at the 'coming out', *ubusoka*, ceremony of the young chiefs, when the old chief and his great commoners formally allot a tract of land to each village of young men, and redraw the boundaries.

621 622 631 In every generation each chiefdom was divided into two (they were originally immigrant groups expanding their territory, and incorporating previous inhabitants). The chief at his accession, or 'coming out', married two 'great wives', whose eldest sons would each be one of his two heirs, and divide his chiefdom. The number of villages which 'came out' with each young chief varied between four and eight. If he was later reduced to a minor position he might be left with only one village of adult men, and one of their sons, as people tended to move away from minor chiefdoms. This was the system which obtained among the Nyakyusa and also among the Ngonde.[2] A summary of the 'coming out' ritual is given here, instead of in the section on ritual, as it indicates some of the features of the political organization.

621 622 624 ●583 Usually eight age-villages 'came out' at the same time, four under each of the young chiefs. At this occasion, some thirty years after the old chief's accession, eight new great commoners were chosen. The two young chiefs were secluded for a few hours in the hut of the old chief's first wife, and received magical treatment. Then they 'came out'. The boundaries of the age-villages were freshly drawn. After the 'coming out', each young chief, whether he was already married or not, married his two great wives, whose first sons would be his heirs. Girls who had not yet reached puberty were carried off from other chiefdoms with a show of force by the chief's men, who later sent cows of their own to regularize the position. The girls stayed at the home of one of the old chief's men until their first menstruation. They were initiated together, not at the house of their fathers, but in the country of their husbands; the old men and women of the country (contemporaries of the retiring chief) played the part usually played by the girl's parents and neighbours; the chief and his young men playing the usual part of the husband and his friends. After the ceremonies the girls were given as wives to the young chiefs, and separate huts were built for them in the two senior age-villages of the chiefdom. Wives married subsequently were attached in order of seniority to one or other of the two 'sides' of the chiefdom. Thus the four age-villages normally attached to a young chief were, from the first days of his official marriage, divided into two. If one of the two great wives bore no sons, the succession for that side of the chiefdom would pass to the son of the next senior wife of that side.

622 Between the 'coming out' of two young chiefs and the death of their own father, a delicate balance of prestige and power was maintained, secular power over their own age-villages passing to each young chief, while the old chief retained control over the

[1] Wilson, 5, 1939, pp. 22–4. [2] Ibid., 3, 1938, pp. 12–15.

5:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1938 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

The Nyakyusa are, predominantly, a patrilineal people, for inheritance normally follows the male line. They differ, however, from the patrilineal peoples of Europe in that brothers inherit before sons. Inherited wealth is thus mainly kept in the hands of the older men, though they are under certain obligations towards their " sons " (whether own or classificatory) in their use of it. Marriage involves a transfer of anything from four to thirty head of cattle from the bridegroom to his father-in-law, and consequently the chief obligation which an older man has, both to his own sons and to the sons of any kinsman from whom he has inherited, is to provide them, in due time, with cattle for marriage. But this obligation is not an absolute one, it depends, in part, upon the due fulfilment by each " son " of his filial duties, which are, firstly, to hoe his father's fields diligently and, secondly, to maintain a respectful bearing towards him. Unmarried men have no gardens of their own, they work their fathers' land and eat the produce of it which their mothers cook.

Under modern conditions money for tax and clothes is necessary both to father and son, and very many young men visit the nearby Lupa gold fields regularly, for periods of a few months at a time, to earn it. A youth who always brings back to his parents after each spell of absence tax money and some presents is held to have done all his duty and he will be given marriage cattle just as soon and as readily as if he had spent all his time hoeing at home. And if he earns more, sufficient to purchase some of his marriage cattle for himself, still his father benefits, for the old man has then to spend fewer beasts from his own stock. But the Lupa needs food as well as labour and some unmarried men stay continuously at home and engage in the production of crops; after the family needs have been met the surplus is sold and from the proceeds the father pays his own tax and his sons' and buys clothes for them as well.

Hoeing, which is the hardest part of Nyakyusa cultivation, is normally done by men, planting; weeding, reaping and cooking by women. But some women nowadays do some hoeing too—if their husbands are away at work or if for any other reason they find it difficult to get enough ground prepared for them. Traditionally, I was told, women never used a hoe at all.

Polygyny is the rule rather than the exception among middle-aged men, and in a polygynous household, as we shall see, each wife has her own garden plots. The institution of polygyny has many other elements besides the economic, but the economic is not the least important of them: the taking of additional wives is the best capital investment which is open to an ordinary, uneducated, Nyakyusa peasant. A Nyakyusa wife is not her husband's property, she is his wife; but as family relationships are, among the Nyakyusa, the basis of economic activity, so the more wives

6:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1939 FN17 Ngonde FN17

439 until the settlement of the Arabs and Europeans in Ngonde, was exchanged " for cloths and rings" with the *Lungwani* (i.e. Arab or half-caste) traders, who regularly crossed the lake from Mwela.

Now the Kyungus of Mbande when compared with their divine-cousins the Lwembes of Lubaga, were fortunate in their geographical position. The conditions which kept them in contact with a market in the early period are beyond our knowledge, we only know the bare fact. But with the opening of the trade route from the east the greater accessibility of Mbande is at once obvious. Mbande is only eight miles from the shores of the lake, Lubaga is forty. Moreover the plain between Lubaga and the lake was occupied in this middle period by Nyakyusa chiefs only distantly related to the Lwembe. Our evidence suggests that, in any case, the traders from Mwela did not reach the north end of the lake in their travels till some time after reaching Ngonde. And it is undoubted that when they did so they traded with the chiefs on the shore one by one and never journeyed inland to Lubaga. To Lubaga the lake shore chiefs sent cows to beg for rain and health, but they sent no ivory; from Lubaga they believed they received their rain and health; but it was from the traders direct that they got the coveted cloth. Ivory was but dry bones without a market, so that the Lwembes had no inducement to claim it.

In Ngonde the Lungwani traders bought relatively little ivory from others save the Kyungu; he alone held large stocks and to him they came first. They gave him red, white and dark cloths and rings also in exchange for the tusks, eating and drinking at his expense during their stay.

Some of the cloths and rings were at once given by him to the nobles of Ngonde, on each occasion that the traders came; others were used as clothes by himself and his household; others were stored for future gifts; while still others he exchanged, either for hoes with the men of Mwela and the Kisi, or with his own people for ivory or slaves.

556 Polygyny and a differential bride-price were important sources of wealth for all the rulers of Ngonde. The numbers of cattle given to
583 great-commoners, nobles or chiefs at the marriages of their daughters were greater than the numbers given to ordinary men. This was a matter of prestige. Moreover girls married younger than boys, so that all fathers usually had an interval between receiving cattle at the marriages of their daughters and giving them away again at the marriages of their sons; during this interval the cattle increased and the increment accrued to them. Now chiefs, nobles and great-commoners usually gave away more cattle at the marriages of their sons than did ordinary men; this again was a matter of prestige. But it did not alter the fact that greater numbers of cattle than usual passed though their hands; and

6:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1939 FN17 Ngonde FN17

so the increment that accrued to them was also greater than usual. And thus they normally had more cattle than ordinary men.

Some of these extra cattle they expended in marrying more wives of their own, who bore them more children. The girl children later brought in more marriage-cattle, and meanwhile the wives and unmarried children worked in the fields and so enabled the rulers to entertain more often and more lavishly than their less married subjects. And it was by lavish entertainment above all that the prestige of a ruler was maintained.

(b) *THE EXPENDITURE OF MBANDE AND OTHER AUTHORITIES.*

All important guests at Mbande, whether traders or subordinates, were, as we have seen, entertained at the Kyungu's expense. Now the entertainment of guests and subordinates is a quite indispensable function of every primitive political authority; power and prestige cannot possibly be maintained without it. Its importance in primitive constitutions has recently been pointed out by Richards in a paper[1] on the constitution of the Bemba tribe in Northern Rhodesia; and the facts of Ngonde tradition bear out her conclusions. Chiefs and nobles were given food and beer when they visited Mbande and the position of Mbande could not otherwise have been maintained. And the Kyungu, like the Citimukulu of the Bemba, also gave to his subordinates gifts of more permanent value.

Cloths were given both to chiefs and nobles. We remember that the very first Kyungu at Mbande is said to "have given headcloths to the indigenous rulers" who, in accepting them, accepted also his overlordship; and from that time onwards the practice continued. Whenever a territorial noble died the nobles of Ngonde came from the Kyungu and formally presented his successor with a dark headcloth, which he then wore turban-fashion as a symbol of his status. And other gifts of cloths were made to them also, from time to time. The nobles of Ngonde likewise were formally presented with dark headcloths on succession and, as we have seen, got gifts of cloth each time the traders came.

And the custom grew up in the middle period of giving cloths to the chiefs also, the sons of the Kyungu. When the chiefs heard that the Kyungu had been buying cloths they used to come, each alone with one man, and be given some. Our evidence does not make clear whether

[1] Audrey Richards "Tribal Government in Transition." Supplement to *J.R.A.S.* Oct. 1935.

6:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1939 FN17 Ngonde FN17

652 431 this was done by all chiefs or only by the great chiefs; but it is certain that the great chiefs possessed more of these cloths than their juniors.

652 431 764 But perhaps the most important traditional use of cloth by the Kyungus was for funeral gifts.[1] The social significance of funeral ceremonial in Ngonde and among the Nyakyusa is hard to exaggerate;[2] for both the economic and the emotional aspects not only of kinship but also of village and political relationships are given formal expression most frequently at funerals. And a gift at a funeral carries greater weight than one on any other occasion.

652 431 567 583 Then, again, chiefs and nobles who brought food to Mbande were often given either a beast or a woman slave in return. "When one of the chiefs had caught a great many fish . . . . . he would gather his men and go to Mbande . . . . . Then the Kyungu would tell one of the nobles of Ngonde to go and fetch a beast or, if no beast were available—and cattle were scarce in the old days—he would give him a woman. And if the chief liked her he would take her in marriage and she would become his lady,[3] but if he did not, then he would take her to his own country and sell her there for a cow." (We expressed some surprise at the rate of exchange.) "Yes, truly, for one cow only, cows were very scarce in those days." And sometimes, in order to make sure he would like her, the visiting chief would be allowed to choose his own girl. "When one of his sons came to visit him the Kyungu would sometimes give orders that he should be shown all the (slave) girls and choose the one he liked best; and so the chief would choose a local girl[4] and marry her. And he could never then sell her, once he had chosen her in love."

Now the gift of a woman slave had many social implications. If she was taken to wife the recipient regarded the Kyungu thereafter as his father-in-law, as well as his "father." She herself became free and her children spoke of the Kyungu as their grandfather. And these gifts did more than any others to strengthen the bonds of kinship between the Kyungu and his subordinate chiefs.

652 431 To his common subjects also, if they had deserved well of him, the Kyungu would occasionally give either cloths or a woman or a cow; and the great chiefs of Ngonde likewise and even ordinary chiefs and nobles did the same. And these subordinate authorities, as we have seen, also used to entertain their own subjects generously with food

[1] *Vide infra* section 7.
[2] Cf. Wilson "Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial." *Bantu Studies*, March 1939.
[3] I use "lady" here to translate "*mwehe*" which is the title of honour used for a chief's wife; the implication is that she then ceased to be a slave.
[4] Slaves were of two kinds, the relatives of criminals and war captives (*vide infra* sections 5 and 6). It was apparently customary to choose one of the first kind on such occasions.

7: Sanderson U-5 (ca. 1920) 1923 FN17 Ngonde FN17

maternal uncle *nkasi*, and she calls him *ndume*. As a sister's son comes very low down in the table of succession, this cannot be due to their prospective relationship should the maternal uncle die, and it may be that the relationship of husband's sister's son is (or was) regarded as analogous to that of wife's brother's daughter. On the other hand, if the father of X exercises his right to marry his wife's brother's daughter, this girl, from being the "sister" of X, becomes his "mother," and her mother (the wife of X's maternal uncle) becomes his "grandmother" and therefore his *nkasi*.

(7) Cross-cousins are classed as "brothers" and "sisters," and all first cousins are, therefore, unmarriageable.

(8) It is of interest to note that a kind of marriage by capture is still in vogue among the Wangonde. It may be performed either with or without the consent of the woman, but, except in the case of a woman to whom the man has a right by relationship, her father's sanction is necessary, and at least part of the dowry must be paid beforehand: usually, the woman is aware that the marriage has been proposed.

The bridegroom, assisted by some friends, either lies in wait for the woman, on the way to the water-supply for instance, or decoys her out of the village by means of a spurious message, and carries her off to his home. Her relatives would be bound in honour to rescue her if the bridegroom were so maladroit as to make it impossible for them to affect ignorance of the abduction. It is said that the marriage is sometimes consummated by force with the assistance of the companions of the bridegroom: in any case, a small present to the girl personally is necessary before consummation.

4. *Succession.*—The order of succession is liable to modification if the legal heir is considered unsuitable for any reason. The relationships are put in the following order of precedence:—

(1) Younger brother by same father and mother.

(2) Younger brother by same father and different mother.

(3) Any younger "brother."

Note.—It would be considered *infra dig.* for an elder "brother" to take the name of his junior, so that, although he has a prior right to the property, he would appoint a younger "brother" to the name. In such a case he may choose which of the "wives" of the deceased he likes, in addition to the cattle.

(4) Eldest surviving son (own begetting).

(5) Eldest son of elder brother (by the same father).

(6) Eldest son of younger brother (by the same father).

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present possesses. A young man is given cows by his father and sends them to his father-in-law; his father's income in cattle is derived partly from the increase of his own stock, but chiefly from the marriages of his own and his brothers' sisters and daughters, for it is the custom for full-brothers and half-brothers to given one another cows as their daughters and sisters get married; the young man's father-in-law gives the cows which he receives some to his brothers, some to his sons, and some he keeps himself. And thus, continually, the cattle are driven down the paths of human relationship.

The passage of cattle makes the children of a marriage legitimate and members of their father's family; the sons can inherit from their father, and the daughters, when they marry in their turn, bring cattle to him. But if a woman bears a child to a man who has given no cows for her, the child is illegitimate, has no right of inheritance anywhere, and belongs either to her husband or father, not to its own biological sire.

Getting married is not a single event; the marriage-cattle are seldom handed over all at once, but in ones, twos, or threes over a period of years; and a girl very commonly goes to visit and sleep with her betrothed husband, from time to time, for several years before she finally sets up house with him and begins to bear his children. There are three ways of getting married: (1) by negotiation with the girl's father (2) by running off with an unmarried girl (3) by running off with a married woman. The first is the ideal, socially approved, method and is not uncommonly followed. The negotiations often begin while the girl is still an infant, sometimes even before she is born; the man sends one or two cows to her father to bespeak her (*okosingela*). These cows are counted as part of the marriage-cattle (*ebyaela*) and the girl is henceforth called his "wife," but she lives at home with her parents. Sometimes a boy is betrothed by his father while he himself is still young, but always, I think, to a girl several years his junior. Such betrothals are determined by the friendship of the two families. A girl who is bespoken in infancy does not, ideally, go to live altogether with her husband till after she has reached puberty and passed through the elaborate initiation which then takes place. But there is an intermediate period when, from the age of ten or earlier, she is allowed to visit and sleep with her husband from time to time. The man sends a bull or a hen to her father to ask for his wife (*okosombolela*), and the old man agrees to let her go on occasional visits. But she is seldom allowed to go until at least three cows, in all, have been received for her. She is not supposed to be deflowered before puberty and she and her husband always, at first, practise limited intercourse without penetration. Not infrequently, however, full intercourse

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583 takes place on some occasion and her parents usually find out when it
584 does. In some families the girl's mother examines her after each visit to
836 her husband to see if the hymen is intact, sometimes the girl tells her mother herself. When her father hears about it his action is determined partly by his feelings towards his son-in-law, partly by his need for cattle. Sometimes he does nothing at all; occasionally he sends back the cows he has received for his daughter and breaks off the marriage, and this is particularly likely to happen if the girl has been forced against her will or generally ill-treated. More usually, however, he sends his daughter to live with her husband saying: "You have made her a woman yourself, you must pay the rest of the marriage-cattle quickly."

836 We have no evidence to suggest that the girls in any general way dislike sleeping with their husbands before puberty, rather the reverse; and the men say: "It is good, it accustoms a girl to her husband." But some girls dislike the particular men to whom they are betrothed.

881 The initiation of a girl at puberty lasts for some months and includes several exchanges of food between her family and that of her husband, and a number of ceremonies in which both her girl friends of the same village[4] and her husband's friends from his village[4] participate. If a girl [584] is not bespoken before puberty the initiation is still carried out in a modified form, but its full significance is lost.

585 Soon after her initiation a girl, if she has been bespoken, goes to live altogether with her husband, to play her part in his economy and to bear him children. If only a few cows have been received for her, her father insists on one or two more being handed over before she is allowed to go. At some time, perhaps during the girl's initiation, perhaps years later, the final marriage ceremony (*okokwa*) takes place. The balance of the marriage-cattle are brought to her father by the husband and his village neighbours,[4] her "mothers" prepare a great deal of food for the guests to eat, there is dancing, feasting and great excitement.

554 The number of cows handed over varies with the wealth and social
583 status of the two families concerned. Six to ten cows is the most usual number, but sometimes as few as four or as many as thirty change hands.

583 The second method of marriage is adopted when a man falls in love with a grown girl, who is not bespoken, and cannot find the cows to satisfy her father at once; he runs off with her and regularizes the position
583 later by sending cattle. The third method is adopted when a man falls
837 in love with a married woman and has cows available; he runs off with

[4] Vide infra "*The Age Village*" [p. 269, cat. 116 — Analyst.]

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583
837 her and then returns to her first husband the cows he had given for her with two in addition as adultery fine. But this return is usually made only after the first husband has brought a lawsuit against him.

837 Adultery is extremely common now-a-days; when a man runs off
684 with, or is discovered seducing, a married woman and has not enough
177 cows to marry her, he is legally compelled to pay two cows for the adultery to her husband. In pre-European days an adulterer, if caught, was usually punished by the husband and his neighbours with death or extreme torture, and the old men tell me that adultery was then a rarer event.

584 The extent to which a girl is usually allowed to choose whom she
177 will marry is difficult to guage, and varies in different circumstances. Opportunities of meeting and flirting with young men at dances and ceremonies are frequent; and the older men say that, owing to the abolition by the Europeans of the old severe punishments for adultery, girls
[582] are freer now than they used to be, for their lovers no longer fear to run off with them if they are married or bespoken (which is in Nyakyusa law very much the same thing). The custom of betrothing infant girls is, they declare, less common than it used to be; they are now more chary of pledging their daughters "for when they grow up they just run off with someone else." A girl's choice is, however, limited by the necessity of finding a lover who has cows, and few young men have enough to secure her if she is already married, though they may have enough to pay an adultery fine.

[428] Owing, in part, to the laws of inheritance, by which a commoner's[5]
593 full-brother inherits before his son, it is the older men who control the cattle. Every bachelor is largely or wholly dependent on his own father (or his dead father's heir) for the cows for his first marriage, and he must hoe his father's fields for many years before he is given enough to secure a wife and to set up a family of his own. Economic reciprocity is an element in most human relationships, and it enters into the Nyakyusa relationship of father and son. It is well understood, in this society, that
593 after a certain length of time spent hoeing his father's fields a young man
685 is entitled to some cows, if his father has any; and if his father delays too long the young man either stops hoeing for his father or else he takes legal action and enforces his claim. Between father and son such law cases are rare, but they are frequent between a young man and the brother of his father who has inherited his father's wives, property, and position in the family.

[5] The laws of inheritance for a chief are, in certain respects, different; vide infra, "The Chiefdom."
1 [Cat. 116 pp. 278 ff. — Analyst]

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583 Normally a bachelor is given cows one by one, over a period of years, and, as we have seen, he sends them, as he receives them, to the father of the girl he wants to marry. One cow is sufficient for betrothal, but not until he has given three can he begin openly to sleep with her. And he cannot usually set up his own economy until he has given at least three cows and she has reached puberty and been initiated. He may of course bespeak an already grown girl, but if he engages himself to a young one he is expected to bring two or more bulls as well, during the course of her initiation.

684 If he chooses to spend his cows in adultery fines, he may, but he will then have to wait longer to get married.

582 561 Thus the system of marriage by a transfer of cattle is, in this society, directly linked with a late marriage age for young men and with a privileged position for older men. When a boy gets cattle he at once gives them to an older man in order to secure his daughter as a wife; the labour of every bachelor helps to increase his father's wealth in food; it is in general the older men alone who can afford more than one wife. And there is an average difference of ten years or more in the initial marriage age of men and girls. The tax registers show in part of the district, among 3,000 [162] adult[6] men, 34% bachelors, 37% monogamists, and 29% polygynists; and investigation proves that, generally speaking, it is the young men who are bachelors, the men over forty-five who are polygynists.

511 574 Though cattle are their most valued form of wealth, it is on agriculture that the economy of the Nyakyusa is primarily based. Meat and milk are luxuries, and daily bread comes from the fields. Hard work in a fertile country provides food for each family, and the millet beer which is the ordinary material of hospitality. Hospitality brings a man prestige and authority among his fellows; on the possession of sufficient food largely depends the contentment of his wives. And in the production, preparation and eating of food the relationships of the family and of the individual family within it, are clearly visible.

241 512 Hoeing is the work of men, planting, weeding, reaping and cooking is the work of women. The men, young and old, hoe for about four hours on most mornings of the year; in the lower altitudes they begin well before sunrise and finish about 9 a.m., on the upland plateau they begin later and continue till noon or beyond. The energetic ones sometimes hoe again for an hour or two in the late afternoon. Different

[6] Presumed to be 18 years or over.

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622 have invaded that country for cows and brought them back and eaten them at the new huts which we built next. But that is finished now." In this way the new chiefs are shown to their people.

631 Finally the young men are told exactly where to go and build, and the boundaries between the new chiefdoms and the villages of each are fixed; the old boys' villages are abandoned and the houses gradually pulled down and put up in their new places. At first the men of the four age-villages of each young chief just put up rough shelters to sleep in, all together on the place where the senior age-village of each new chiefdom will later be built, but after a month or two they separate, each village to its own place, and there they build their houses.

The land is now their own, they are no longer members of boys' villages, living on land given them at the side of the parent villages by their fathers, they are owners of the soil, full citizens, with chief and great commoners to rule them.

(*b*) *Organization and Life of a Single Chiefdom*

622 583 A few months after the "Coming Out" each of the two young chiefs marries two wives. He may be married already, but the two whom he now takes rank as his great wives (*avake avakolombu*) and their sons are his two heirs in the chieftainship. Young girls, daughters of neighbouring chiefs, are carried off with a show of force from their fathers' homes by the young chief's men, who, themselves, later send cows to regularize the position. The two great wives are thus married, not with the cows of their husband, but with those of the men whose sons their sons will one day rule.

622 585 881 Girls are carried off who are just about to reach puberty, and they stay at the house of one of the men of the old chief until their periods begin. When both have reached puberty they are initiated, not at their fathers' houses, but in the country of their husband, both together. At their initiation, the old men and women of the country (contemporaries of the old, retiring, chief) play the part normally played by a girl's parents and their neighbours, while the young chief and his men take the usual part of a husband and his friends. And then, after the ceremonies are over, the two girls are given to the young chief as his wives. Houses are built for them separately: in the senior age-village of the new chiefdom for the first wife, in the next senior village for the second wife; and in this separation of dwelling place is already apparent the future division of the chiefdom between their sons.

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CHAPTER IV

THE RITUAL OF CHIEFTAINSHIP

(a) THE 'COMING OUT'

THE ritual which arouses the greatest excitement in BuNyakyusa and in which every man, woman, and child participates, is the 'coming out' when the two heirs of a chief are acknowledged as rulers, and the government of the country is handed over to them and their village headmen.[1] This ritual occurs but once in a generation, when the chief's senior sons are between thirty and thirty-five years old; they, and their slightly older contemporaries and juniors 'come out' together. Should one, or even both heirs of a chief die after their 'coming out' and before their sons are grown up, the ritual is not celebrated again—it cannot be, for it concerns not individuals but a generation. Instead the young chiefs are replaced by their younger 'brothers', full or classificatory. And should a village headman die he also is replaced by his heir; the office does not lapse. Therefore there are two types of change in status: the great communal ritual when the old men retire and their sons take office, and the family ritual when a dead man is succeeded by his younger brother or his son. An *individual* may inherit from his father, succeeding to his office and moving into his homestead at any time, and when he has done so he is treated formally as a member of his father's generation; but the celebration throughout the chiefdom of sons succeeding fathers only takes place thrice in a century. Each chiefdom celebrates separately. There is no attempt to synchronize with neighbours.

It was usual, traditionally, for two sons to succeed their father, and divide his country between them. The division was foreshadowed at the father's 'coming out' when he married two senior wives and settled them in different sections of his country; but it sometimes happened that a chief had a favourite for whom he built separately, and whose son went through the 'coming out' with his brothers and became independent, unless he was defeated in war and subjugated. Even a son who had no expectation of a

[1] Neither of us saw a 'coming out' in full. Godfrey Wilson saw the conclusion of the coming out of the heirs of Mwangoka (24) in November 1935 and in April 1955 I was able to observe the territorial changes brought about by Mwanyilu's (117) 'coming out' in December 1953.

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622 He, like many of his men, may have been married long before the
643 'coming out', but his ritual wedding to the mothers of his heirs
796 follows it, and from the time of his seclusion, until his marriage,
585 he, and all his men, should live as bachelors. The brides are chosen by his village headmen and in theory they are carried off by force, whether betrothed or not, but nowadays, since the [177] Administration discountenances forced marriages, the headmen arrange matters with the girls' families beforehand, very privately, but still they come with a show of force to carry off the brides. Girls are chosen who are approaching puberty and they are taken to the house of a commoner contemporary of their future husband. There they live until both have grown up and the puberty ritual can be celebrated. It follows the usual course except that the [584] neighbours of the man in whose house the brides are secluded play the part of the girls' families, cooking for the groom's party at the prescribed feasts. The chief washes with both girls, thereby acknowledging them as his senior wives; the marriage bed is prepared with medicines and there is great rejoicing. The following morning someone knocks at the door of the nuptial chamber crying: 'War has come', and the chief and his brides rush out to the pasture land, just as the parents of twins do at the end of their ritual.[1] Then[2] a long narrow stone (*ulufiga*) is set with medicines [789] in the earth, beside the chief's trees as a symbol of his marriage (*ikimanyilo kya bwegi*) to the mothers of his heirs. 'The stone *is* the chief' (*ilifiga ili jo malafyale*). Hearth-bricks (*amafiga*) are then set up for each bride with medicines buried beneath them, and they are given fire from that ritually kindled by their husband and his headman. Finally they are given medicines to drink in order to develop in them 'the dignity of chief's wives' (*ubuziya bwa bwehe*).

643 No marriage is complete, in Nyakyusa eyes, until cattle have
583 been handed over, and though the chief's brides have been carried off by force, cattle—more than double the normal number—are given to their fathers. The village headmen of the retiring generation should provide these cattle and they or their heirs are recompensed when the eldest daughters born of the two wives are

[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 158, 169.

[2] Mwanyilu's marriage apparently preceded the planting of his trees and the phallic stone was erected at the same time as the trees were planted, but the marriages of the sons of Mwangoka *followed* the planting of *their* trees. The order of events seems to vary, and differences are explained as due to the order of the doctor in charge of the ritual. 'Different doctors have different customs.'

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married. Thus, yet another bond is forged between chief and headman, for he who provides marriage cattle is 'father' to him who marries, and the chief's wives acknowledge this by avoiding the village headmen of the senior generation as they do their father-in-law. Once the chief's ritual marriage is complete the sex taboo is lifted and such of his men as are already married are joined by their wives. In theory, though not nowadays in practice, the taboo is observed until the marriage of the chief.

All through the ritual of the 'coming out' the idea of a new beginning is expressed—a new site for the villages, new houses, new fire, new power for the young men. The events of this ritual, the seclusion, the lying on a litter, the prohibition on washing, washing with medicines in the doorway of the hut, the admonition, are directly parallel to the events of the rituals of death and puberty which, we have argued in a previous book,[1] are dramatizations of death and rebirth. There seems little doubt that the 'coming out' is yet another celebration of this theme. The young men enter an enclosed house—that of the senior's mother—and 'come out' (*ukusoka*) renewed as a child 'comes out' (*ukusoka*) of the mother's womb. No Nyakyusa informant volunteered such an interpretation, but, when it was suggested, it was eagerly accepted as expressing the real meaning of 'coming out'.

(*b*) THE CHIEF'S MEDICINES

Reference has already been made to medicines used by chiefs and by village headmen at the 'coming out' and we must now examine them more closely. The great medicines of chieftainship are *ifingila* and their function is to create *amaaga*, i.e. spiritual power, and *ubunjya*, i.e. dignity, majesty, in order to make the chief fearful 'so that men obey him'. The medicines are comparable to robes of office for they are designed to give their user assurance and fill the commonality with awe. The Nyakyusa also think that chiefs and headmen should be 'heavy' with 'pythons in their bellies' which give them the power to see and fight witches. Without such a 'python' a chief or village headman cannot fulfil his duty of 'watching over the country by day and by night' and if a man is not born with one he may develop it through the proper use of medicines. This notion has been examined elsewhere.[2] The *ifingila* medicines are also thought to give courage and ferocity (*ubugasi*) in war, with luck in seizing enemy

[1] *op. cit.*, p. 223. [2] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 97-100.

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that polygyny is compatible with Christianity, and indeed sanctioned by the example of many of the heroes of the Old Testament. It is here that the cleavage between pagan and Christian ways of life is felt to be greatest: the desire to marry or inherit a second wife is the main reason for many men leaving the mission Churches. The traditional way for the well-to-do man to expend his capital and maintain his position was to marry again and the wealth of the lineage was concentrated in the senior line through the rule of inheritance of widows.

Again and again in sermons Nyakyusa preachers came back to the problem of polygyny. 'Let not those who know not the law deceive you saying, "You, Christian, what is one poor little wife? (*ikilikuli kimo kyene*) See, do not your children also die (like those of pagans) and constantly fall ill? Take a second wife." Perhaps the BaNgemela tell you that God also favours that. If you agree you are uprooted. What, after all, is a second wife? In Jesus there is life.' (2 Peter iii. 17.)

Young men are also caught in a contradiction of values when their fathers have betrothed them while still quite young.

It is very difficult for a man to refuse a girl whom his father has engaged for him. To a pagan man it does not matter very much because, provided he has cattle, he can always marry a girl of his own choice as well, but a Christian cannot. Such was the case of a friend of ours, A, a Christian teacher. When he was a child, before he was baptized, his father, a senior village headman and a powerful and wealthy man, engaged for him B, a little girl who could barely walk. A got on well at school and when he was growing up the missionary said to him: 'When you marry choose a girl of some education, because it is good for an educated man to marry an educated girl.' A fell in love with C, a Christian, who had learnt to read and write, and sew and launder, and who consequently was one of the best-educated girls in the district. They came to an understanding together, our informant being the 'go-between'. A went to the elders of the congregation and told them he wished to marry C. They replied: 'We, on our part agree; go and ask your father.' Then A's father said: 'Well, no, B is your wife (though she was still a child and the marriage had not been consummated), but you are my eldest son, I have many cattle, I agree to arrange marriages with them both for you at once.' So A thought and thought and went back to the elders and told them saying: 'My father refuses, he won't hear of it unless I marry

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them both, but I don't want to leave the Church.' Then the elders supported his father saying, 'We don't like sons to be disobedient and the girl will make a good wife for you.' 'But,' argued A, 'my wife is a child and C is grown up.' The missionary supported him saying: 'We are going to send him to a distance (to train as a teacher), it is better that he go married.' But the elders supported his father, following the Nyakyusa custom. Then a message came to A saying that B had 'grown-up'. He said to us, his friends: 'What can I say now? I can no longer argue that my wife is a child.' And to the missionaries and elders he said: 'Send me away for my training. I must think, I am not at peace.'

While A was still away D (who was a close friend of A's) came back from school, and he too fell in love with C. But before he spoke to her he wrote to A asking him: 'Have you broken with her, or are you still agreed to marry? Can I make love to her or not?' Then A wrote back: 'Yes, I have broken with her, it is true that I love her, but I cannot square marrying her with Christianity. Go ahead.' So then D came to our informant to ask him to be the go-between again, and to take him to the girl. So they went and showed her A's letter, and asked her if she could love D. Then she was very sorrowful and would give no answer until she had written to A herself. 'Is it true that you have left me?' And A replied: 'Indeed, my dear, I have left you. I love you truly, but what can we do? Perhaps the powers do not wish that we should marry. My father refuses. He says he will arrange a marriage with you, for me, as my second wife, but what of our Christianity? Are we both to leave the Church?' So then she agreed to marry D.

All this time the elders had supported A's father in his refusal saying: 'B also is a proper woman. We are surprised at the young man.' And A's father said to him: 'I betrothed this girl for you when she was quite tiny. *Kyala* has already given you this woman.' But the marriage of A and B proved a failure—they were constantly quarrelling—and later they were divorced.

The 'go-between' of this story was more fortunate in his own marriage. Like A he was the son of a wealthy pagan and two wives had been betrothed for him before he became a Christian. When he decided to be baptized he flatly refused to marry either of them. His father was very angry. 'For a time he treated me as if I were not his son, saying: "Since you refuse these girls I will not give you any cows to marry at all." So I said: "All right," and

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went away to work again and in time I earned four cows which I hid with friends far from home. My father knew nothing about them. Then I wrote to my father from Mwasebe [about twenty miles from where his father lived] where I was working, saying that I had found a girl there, the daughter of a Christian, and please could I have the cows with which to marry her? My father said: "No, she lives too far away." ' Then later he found a Christian girl of whom his father approved and a satisfactory marriage was arranged.

A common topic of discussion among Christian women was whether parents should choose mates for their children, or leave them free to choose for themselves, for though traditionally a girl had to signify her consent to marriage, she was betrothed very young and her freedom of choice was small. The growing insistence on personal freedom in marriage is symptomatic of a radical change in the attitude towards persons.

The pagan rituals were the main occasions of recreation. It has been shown, in *Rituals of Kinship*, how pagan funerals and marriages are the occasion for feasting and dancing and display, and how the seclusion hut of a nubile girl is the gathering place for the young men and girls of the neighbourhood. Even a twin ritual is a festival with beer for the older men and some meat for everyone. The sacrifices at the groves were feasts for the leading men of the country, and the 'coming out' was the occasion of the greatest feast of the generation, and dances were practised for months ahead. Partly because of a change in sex morality, and partly because the meat and beer at pagan feasts are offered to the shades, Christians are largely excluded from these festivals. They may not participate in pagan dances, or join in the lewd songs, or attend the initiation hut of a girl; and they are partly debarred from the feasts of the pagans: certain of the Churches (notably the Church of Scotland and, for a time, the Moravians) forbid Christians to drink beer at all.

And the Christian rituals, though some of them are 'festivals of the Church', are scarcely celebrated as such. There has been a separation between ritual and recreation which has left a gap in the Christian community. It is true that the Christian young men and girls sing and dance at funerals and marriages, but the elders, for the most part, look on with dubious eyes, saying that dancing leads to adultery, and several of the dances introduced by

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that they have always been cattle men and they need no instruction on cattle. The tension over stock limitation and soil conservation, so acute in many parts of Africa, is only just appearing in Rungwe district, but potentially it is serious.

Pressure on land, and the planting of a valuable long-term crop such as coffee, have undermined the traditional organization of age-villages. The old men are no longer prepared to move to make way for their sons and, without a new deal in land each generation, the territorial separation of the generations is blurred. Boys villages are no longer visible in the hills near Rungwe mission, partly because so many young men are away, either at school or in employment, but largely because most of the land is taken up with coffee gardens. Homesteads are being built farther apart as men lay out coffee round their houses, and sons often build on a corner of their father's estate instead of in a separate village. On the plain, also, the pressure of population blurs the boundaries between generations. Only in the least heavily populated middle belt are numerous boys' villages still clearly visible, and here too a 'coming out' has recently been celebrated, with some redistribution of land. The scarcest land, that in old volcanic craters, was always inherited, like cattle, not reallocated each generation, and almost all cultivated land is now treated in this way. In many chiefdoms, therefore, a young man looks to his father or senior brother for land, rather than to the village headman, and inheritance is supremely important. But the form of inheritance is changing: property now goes directly from father to son, not as formerly to each of a group of full brothers before reverting to the senior son of the eldest of them. The claims of more distant kinsmen on inherited stock are less than they used to be; such stock becomes the exclusive property of father and sons, rather than property in which members of a lineage of three or four generations have reciprocal rights. The main economic bond which held the lineage together, the exchange of cattle, is thus broken.

Formerly a marriage was a contract between lineages rather than between individuals. A girl was betrothed before puberty to a man of her father's choice and should he die she was still regarded as married to his heir. Should she die a sister replaced her. Ideally a marriage bond between lineages lasted for generations, each man who died being replaced by a brother or son, each woman by a sister or brother's daughter. The choice of a partner in marriage

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was not an individual one. True, a girl gave her formal consent in the marriage ritual, but the pressure on her to accept the husband selected for her by her kinsmen was almost irresistible. In the thirties Christian women who refused their husband's heir and lived alone, or married an unrelated man of their choice, were regarded by their pagan sisters as very daring, and little girls in pagan families took it as a matter of course that they should replace their dead sisters; today the right of a widow to choose whom she will marry is generally accepted, and the custom of replacing a dead woman by her sister has lapsed. 'Every girl wants her own husband nowadays', the old women say. Thus lineage obligations give way to individual freedom of choice in marriage. At the same time the rituals which emphasized the lineage are dropped or modified. The fearful fecundity of a double birth no longer appals men and the twin ritual which used to bring together all the living members of a lineage of three generations is not celebrated at all. At a puberty ritual a pagan girl may be given the *ikipiki* medicine, the symbol of 'the blood of the lineage' by her mother, but there is no seclusion and elaborate feasting, no sacrifice of the bull of puberty that her father's shades may 'move aside a little' to make way for the shades of her husband's lineage. Only at a funeral do kinsmen still gather and celebrate, for many still fear the shades, and at a funeral the heir is installed and the importance of property and the inheritance of it has not diminished one whit. As we have seen, the traditional religion was formulated in terms of kinship; the gods were senior kinsmen; but today God, *Kyala*, is no ancestor; to pagans as well as to Christians he is separate and supreme. Men are still classified by their lineages, and one of the topics of village questions is how Prince Charles can be heir to the British throne when his father is not of the house of Windsor; but already in the economic field, and increasingly in the religious, it is the family of parents and children which is now dominant, not the lineage.

Divorce is far more frequent than formerly, partly because women claim a greater freedom of behaviour than before, as well as the right of choosing their own husbands, and are supported by the courts. As one village headman put it, 'Formerly a father beat his daughter with a stick if she ran home and sent her back to her husband who also beat her.' The women reject the old pattern of subservience which was expressed in crouching to greet a man, and addressing him in a very deferential fashion; the men observe, and

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I went to the place and got permission to enter the hut in which the first part of the ceremony took place. I found there the parents of the girl, the girl sitting enveloped in clothes in one corner of the hut, and some older females, one of whom was the acting *unnyago*. Some male guests were also present[29]. As the girl had had her first catamenia the present ceremony marked at the same time the end of her preparation for marriage.

The *unnyago* prepared a beverage of beer in which a light-brown medical powder *(imbondanya)* was put. First the girl had to drink from it, then the parents followed. This beverage was believed to strengthen *(ubusisya)* the consumers. Then a spear was handed to the girl by her father, and the girl handed it in turn to some relatives of the bridegroom waiting near the hut. These persons had to bring the spear to the girl's bridegroom as a sign that he could now marry the girl[31], but not before he had brought a bull to the girl's father. After this the girl, now sitting in the middle of the hut, was given small gifts from the participants in the ceremony.

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Following this the whole body of the girl was anointed before the door of the hut. The *unnyago* began by anointing her legs; then the girl herself continued it. The ointment was prepared from castor oil and a powder of red wood *(Kipimba,* found commonly in the environment of Lake Rukwa). At this moment a male participant in the ceremony chanced to, come out of the hut, and suddenly a young woman

[29] Cf. Wilson, Introduction, p. 258; The Study of African Society, p. 11 (The Rhodes-Livingstone Paper No. 2, 1939).

[31] *ukwega*: to take (also as regards marrying); *ubwepia*: nuptials.